

INFOCUS



The Official Publication of The Jamaican Canadian Association

NOVEMBER ISSUE 2015



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:

JCA's New Approach to Advocacy



JCA President Barrington B. Coke.

The history of JCA during its 53 years as a community organization within the Canadian society is rich and varied. It started as a social organization where strangers in this faraway land could socialize, assist each other, and celebrate Jamaica's independence. It later advocated for injustice against our citizens and took on some social services roles. JCA is redefining itself by once again separating from social services. In this way more attention can be given to membership, community development, and advocacy.

If we examine JCA's history of advocacy we see that much of the work was primarily reactive. And that was necessary based on the need at the time: community demographics, economics, social, and political climate. As the demographics of our community changes we need to re-examine what advocacy means to today's generation of African Canadians and people of Caribbean descent.

The report "TOWARDS A VISION FOR THE BLACK COMMUNITY" stated that "Nearly 100 years ago Marcus Garvey wondered about the progress Black people had made 77 years after the abolition of Slavery in the British Empire in 1833.

Not much has changed. In 2012, Blacks in the US control only 0.5% of that nation's wealth, and make up over 51% of their prison population. Their average income is the least of all the cultural groups. These statistics are unchanged from 1881. There is no real progress. However, individual accomplishments and the illusion of social inclusiveness give us the perception of actual progress. This is a result of systematic and institutionalized racism.

Our approach to advocacy today must be different from 1962. For one, the bulk of Black and Caribbean people were new immigrants. Today, most were born here and do not identify with the struggles of that time. There is a more universal and generic need for advocacy, that does not depend on the birth place of the disenfranchised or their perception of the issues. It is economic power.

An interesting correlation is the distribution of average income compared to rate of business ownership. According to Dr. Claude Anderson (President of the Harvard Institute), 1 in 10 Asians own their own business and has the highest average income. For Whites, 1 in 54 owns their own business and enjoys the second highest average income. The lowest average incomes are among Blacks, where 1 in 104 owns their own business (the least of all the groups).

In the Canadian context, Stats Canada data for 2006 suggests that 62.8% of Blacks had wages and salary income of less than \$20,000 as compared with 55.7% of visible minorities as a whole and 59.5% of the total population. Self-employment income for individuals in the Black community was at 4.8% as compared to 7.2% percent for the general population. There was no available data correlating business ownership and income.

Some key factors for the development of any community are education, employment, health, housing, justice and safety, family, and political engagement. As long as the wealth is in the hands of other cultures, and we have to depend on them for these development needs, we will be unfairly treated. Economic well-being is an important cornerstone to improving our performance in these areas and facilitating social inclusion. This will bring us a far way towards effective income redistribution, keep our children out of jails, and prevent unfair treatment by the justice system. Our approach to advocacy then must be formulated around increasing our economic power through business ownership and group economics.

While our position remain stagnant the relative wealth of other cultures (like the Jews and Asians) grows by leaps and bounds. This is because, in addition to business ownership, they practice group economics. Group economics is practiced by every culture; except blacks. That is, they pool their resources vertically. Dr. Anderson also suggested that money circulates (stays) within their community many times before leaving it. In the Jewish community it circulates 18 times, Asian community - 14 times, White - 10 times. In our community this is less than 1 time.

In my mind, what advocacy means for our community today is to improve those economic and social measures. A long term improvement approach is required. There are immediate issues like carding that must be addressed. However, if we focus entirely on these short term reactive approaches, we will be kept busy for eternity, as the more than 130 years of stagnation will continue.

We ought to advocate internally and externally as follows:

1. Influencing public policies to provide the environment for Black business success. That is capital, business education, and physical space.
2. Educate our people into the benefits of business ownership and supporting our businesses.
3. Work with at risk families to guide our young people into a disciplined approach to basic education, business education, and how to better exercise our economic power by increasing money circulation within our community. The power of group economics.
4. Provide incubation and assistance to guide businesses. Such as identifying where there is a competitive edge and where the bulk of our money is spent.

Therefore, instead of only reacting to the issues of the day, JCA will begin to transform its approach to advocacy into research, data collection, identification of trends, and putting forward policy positions to impact those trends. Then we can advocate and lobby for public policy directions that assist our aim of increased business ownership and money retention within our community. Thus improving the metrics cited above.

We must be adequately represented, have the power to live in our own neighbourhood with pride, and hire who we want.

Barrington B. Coke

President



JCA Vice-President Maureen Ennis

Dear Readers,

In my first six months as Vice-President I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you formally and informally in your various capacities as JCA Staff, Volunteer, Member, Committee Chair and/or Friend.

Without doubt, your individual and collective commitment to the JCA and the broader community it serves is inspirational.

I respect the good work that you have done and continue to do. And, in this my first Infocus Newsletter message would like to express my gratitude for all your hard work, dedication and commitment.

Also in the past six months, I have been privileged to work with a Board comprised of devoted individuals whose singular goal is to build on the legacy of JCA founders by addressing the challenges the JCA currently face and, thus, propel our organization to greater heights.

At this time, the Board's primary focus is charting a new course to build wealth so that we can extended the cultural and political reach of the JCA, repair and refurbish our building and expanded our membership base.

In order to realize this objective, I believe "we should always listen for inspiration and impression to proceed in ways different from those we may have thought of" (John H. Groberg).

That is to say, we must hear, be open to and consider new, innovative or creative solutions to achieve the full potential of our beloved organization. To this end, I look forward to working collaboratively with the Board, JCA members and the community.

It has been an honour to serve thus far and I look forward to providing more updates in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Maureen A. Ennis'. The signature is stylized with a large 'M' and 'E'.

Maureen A. Ennis

The JCA Political Advocacy Committee is dedicated to ensuring political engagement and representation through various programs, including the annual Christmas Dinner. It is a time to celebrate the community and to raise funds for the JCA's political advocacy work.

MERRY CHRISTMAS



VENUE:

The Jamaican Canadian Centre,
995 Arrow Road, North York

DATE:

Sunday December 6, 2015

TIME:

2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION:

Toddlers to Youth (12 years old)

DONATION:

\$10.00 donation per child

Registration Deadline: November 30th, 2015 (Only registrations paid by this date will be honoured).

For further information contact the JCA Office @ 416 746 5772

CHRISTMAS IS COMING! CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

REGISTER YOUR CHILD BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE !

Toys, refreshments, visit with Santa!

For further information contact the JCA membership Office @ 416 746 5772 Ext: 249

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Keith Mills — JCA Annual Charity Golf Classic

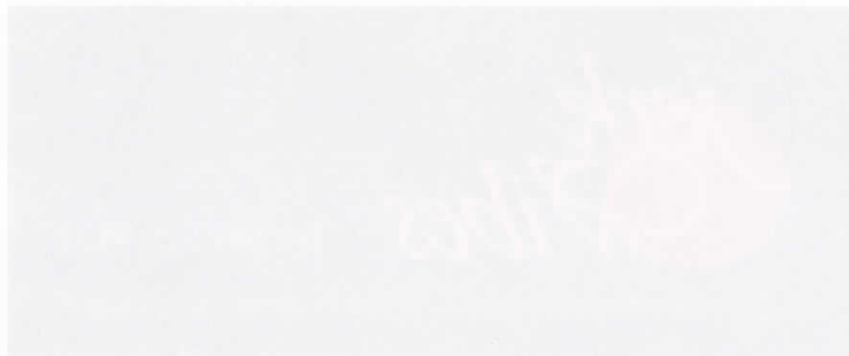
The 16th of what we hope will be many more, the JCA Annual Charity Golf Classic took place on Saturday, August 15, 2015 and by all reports was a great event for everyone.

This 62-player event started at 1:30pm at the Royal Woodbine Golf Club 18-hole championship, par -72 course. The weather was perfect for a day of golf, with the sun shining mostly with a sprinkling of rain and not too much of a late summer breeze.

After playing 18 holes, everyone returned to the Club House for dinner, an auction, and prizes. There were a few sponsors for this event so all who participated received prizes or gift certificates. A big thank you to all the sponsors who generously gave.

In the end, the JCA 16th Annual Charity Golf Classic raised funds for the JCA Saturday Morning Tutorial Program and the JCA Scholarship Awards. The golf committee was thrilled with the day. They said, "This is a great start in rejuvenating the tournament and we are very pleased that it made a moderate profit in spite of the lower than usual turnout." A huge thank you to the golf committee for their hard work! We are truly grateful for everything they have done to help youth in our community.

Remember to keep your eyes on the ball and check out the website and Facebook page next year for more details of the JCA 17th Annual Charity Golf Classic.

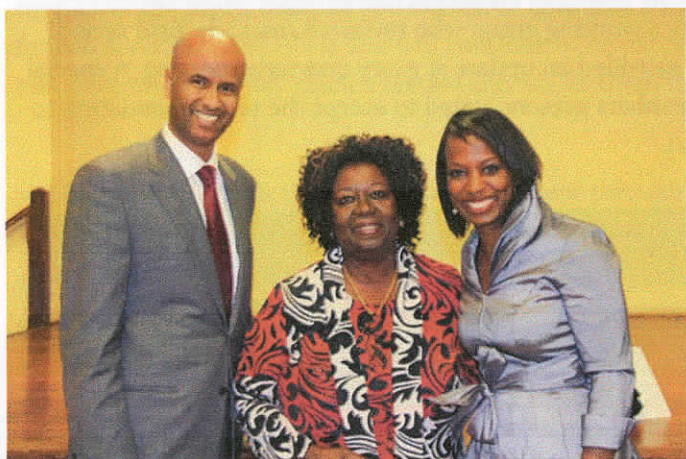


JCA Political Advocacy Committee

The JCA Political Advocacy Committee is dedicated to increasing political engagement within the African-Canadian communities through forums, meetings, community discussions, training and research projects. The committee's aim is to galvanize the community in order to increase overall participation in politics, inside and outside of election cycles.

Since its re-launch in July 2014, the committee has been quite active in creating important dialogues in the community. In March of this year, an event was held to recognize those community members who ran in the 2014 municipal elections, as well as to discuss the state of the community politically. This past July was quite busy. It started off with a non-partisan candidate training workshop for Black candidates who were running in the Federal elections and ended with a community roundtable which was held to dive further into the political challenges facing the community and possible solutions. In November, a community celebration and send off was held for newly elected MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes and MP Ahmed Hussen.

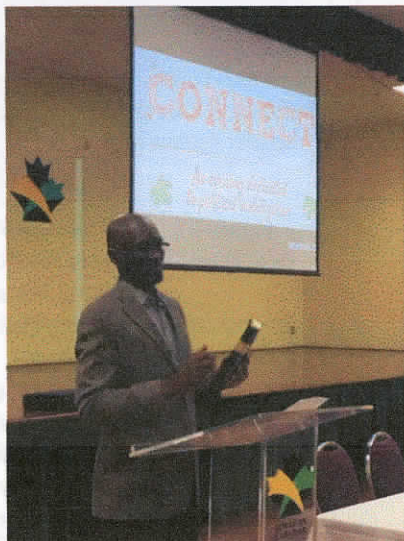
The Committee is busy and active and looks forward to an exciting 2016 that will include many more community meetings, presentations and strategizing dialogues. The PAC will continue to play a key role in addressing the challenges faced by the African-Canadian community.



MP Ahmed Hussen (York South-Weston), former MP, The Honourable Jean Augustine, MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Whitby) – Community Reception, November 12, 2015



Tiffany Gooch (standing) providing training alongside fellow panellists Tamer Abdalla and Suzanne Nurse – Get Ready to Win: A Non-Partisan Campaign Team Readiness Workshop, July 4, 2015



Royson James sharing his political observations – JCA Connect: An Evening Dedicated to Political Mobilization, March 12, 2015

Transition Team Update

A Family in Transition

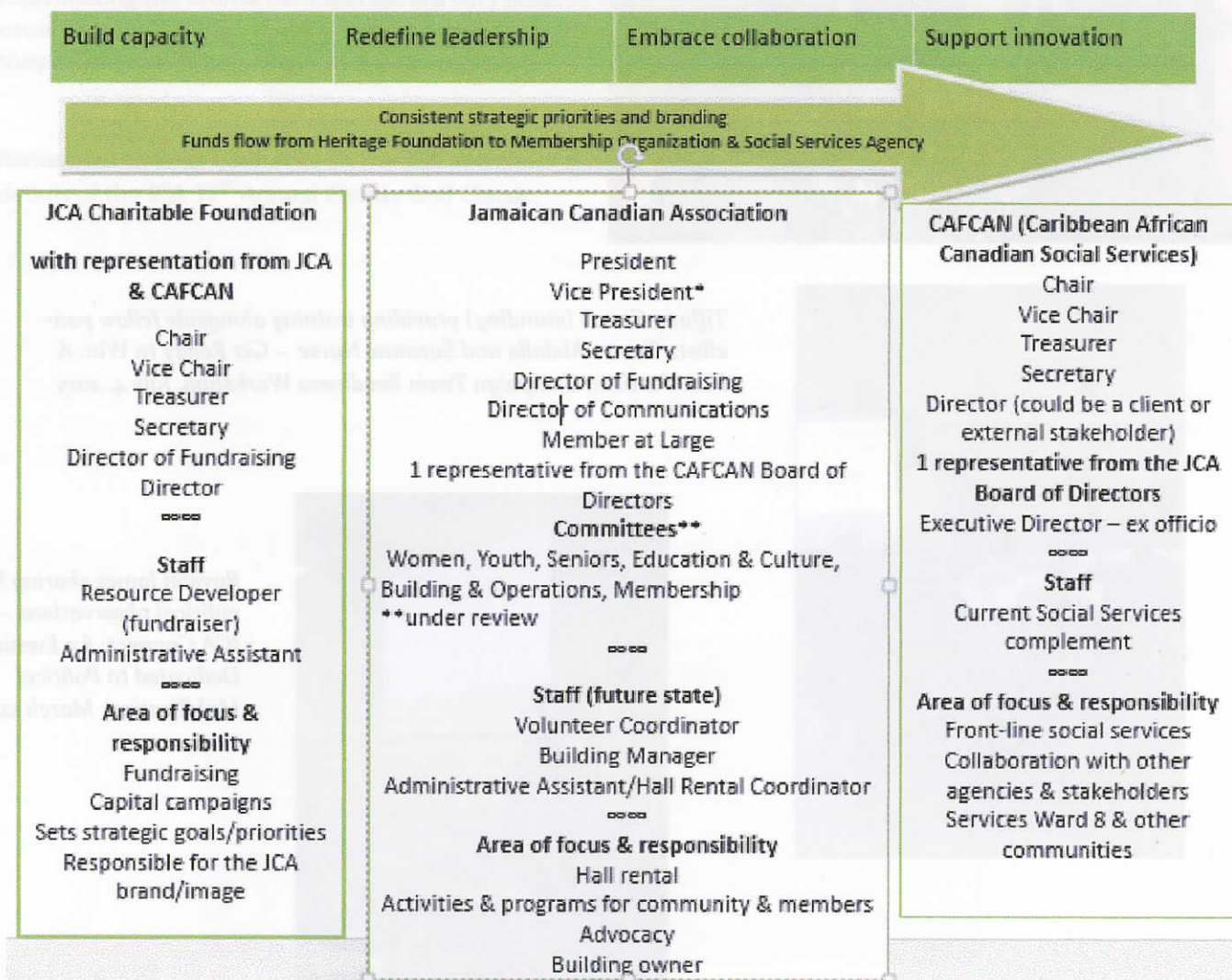
'All great achievements require time.' Maya Angelou

It should not be a surprise to you that the JCA is in transition – the biggest transition in the organization's history. The most difficult changes are often the most necessary and this transition is no exception. The Transition Team thanks both Boards of Directors and you the members for your steadfast support, even when things do not seem to be heading in the right direction or you are not sure what is happening. We encourage you to stay the course – continue to be involved in this great organization because good things cannot happen without your participation and support.

Questions you may have

Why did the Transition Team break up the JCA?

The Transition Team did not 'break up' the JCA. You will recall that you the membership moved a motion in 2011 for the board to call a special membership meeting to decide if JCA should separate its social services from membership. The Board decided to expand that request by forming a working group who reviewed research, held several consultations and workshops over a 12-month period and provided an update at every quarterly meeting. A special membership meeting was held on June 27, 2013 and the members present, voted to accept the recommendation to separate the JCA into three organizations (see chart below).



Transition Team Cont'd

Since that June 27, 2013 meeting, the Transition Team has provided updates at the quarterly meetings and in the newsletter.

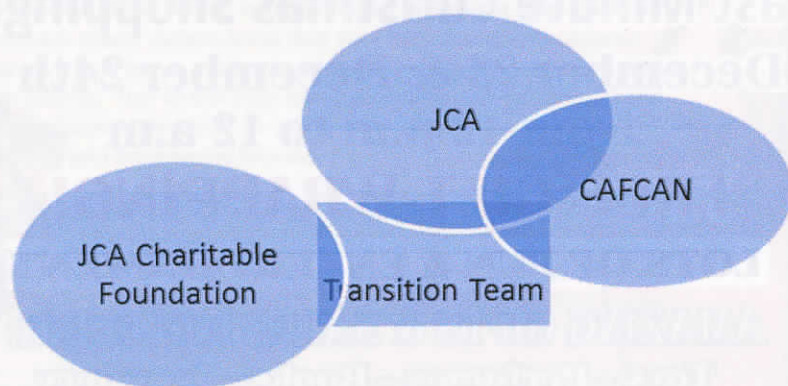
2) Why is the Social Services so focused on African-Canadian rather than Jamaican?

The reality is, the JCA social services, now called CAFCAN, has been serving the wider Black, Caribbean, African community plus others for several years. Social Services is funded by the government and United Way to deliver services to everyone, not just Jamaicans. Like everything else around us the social services has had to change to stay relevant. The social services of today is not the one of twenty-five years ago and was struggling to be effective within the old structure. Over the years, many of you expressed concerns about our ability to do and say what we wanted because of the funded services. CAFCAN is and will continue to be part of the JCA family but it is creating its own identity. Just like our children, once they reach a certain age, we let them fly and find their way; JCA is doing the same with CAFCAN.

3) This transition feels the same as what we went through with the expansion of the credit union. Is this the same as the Credit Union?

No. During the 1990's, the provincial government offered JCA support to expand the credit union provided we broaden it to include the wider Black/African-Canadian communities. As a result of ongoing struggles, fights and inability to work together, the government pulled the funding. JCA's separation was not initiated by the government but by you the members and the decision was only made AFTER significant discussions with you. The Jamaican Canadian Association still exists in a similar form as before.

What is next?



The Transition Team will continue to play a visible role in managing the changes at JCA and CAFCAN.

Transition Team Cont'd

- We will work with the JCA and CAFCAN boards to ensure the plan stays on track
- We hope to roll out a communications strategy and would like to you play a role. We will provide quick updates on Facebook, Twitter, our web-site and the JCA weekly email.
- We will work with Kamala-Jean Gopie to get the Charitable Foundation up and running
- We will be here to answer your questions and address your concerns about the changes

How can you support?

- Invite your friends and family to join as members and/or volunteer
- Tell them about the changes taking place
- Trust that despite the challenges we are moving in the right direction
- Contact the transition team at acpcommsservices@gmail.com or call any of the members if you have concerns and/or suggestions.

A festive poster for the Jamaican Canadian Association's Christmas Grand Market. The background is a warm yellow-orange gradient with large, stylized Christmas ornaments in red, gold, and green. Pine branches with red berries and gold baubles are scattered around the top and sides. In the bottom left corner, there is a cartoon illustration of Santa Claus with a white beard and a red hat. In the bottom right corner, there are two wrapped gifts, one green and one red, both with gold ribbons. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold, serif, and sans-serif fonts. The Jamaican Canadian Association logo is in the top left corner.

 **Jamaican Canadian Association**
Presents

CHRISTMAS GRAND MARKET
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December 23 & December 24th
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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

The Jamaican Canadian Association Women's Committee

Excerpts from a Round Table Discussion on Domestic Violence Awareness held by the Jamaican Canadian Association Women's Committee on June 19, 2015.

Domestic Violence can affect anyone including men, women, youth and children. Your first priority if you are a victim is to ensure the safety and security of you and your children. Violence can present itself in many forms such as physical, mental, emotional, psychological and verbal. Most violence is centered around power and control.

You might be experiencing domestic violence if your partner:

- ⇒ Hits, kicks, shoves, slaps, chokes or otherwise hurts you or your children
- ⇒ Engages in sexual acts against your will
- ⇒ Calls you names and insults you
- ⇒ Prevents you from going to school or work
- ⇒ Stops you from seeing your family members or friends
- ⇒ Threatens you with a weapon
- ⇒ Shows jealousy or possessiveness or constantly accuses you of being unfaithful

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Q. Why don't the abused leave the situation?**
 - A. Fear of breaking up the family and the threat of leaving may escalate into more violence. Many victims think that they can change the abuser's behavior. Many victims leave and return because of embarrassment and societal expectations. The victim may see the ending of a relationship as a failure. Many abusers are seen as being nice people and are loved by their communities and have many friends.
- **Q. At what age should a child learn about healthy relationships?**
 - A. As early as possible. What a child sees in an abusive situation, may extend to the school. Fights and bullying might ensue. The child might grow up to be an abuser.
- **Q. How can a victim maintain privacy when the abuser constantly checks the phone and email messages?**
 - A. Delete all messages as soon as possible. Be educated on how to clear browsers and communicate through a central number.
- **Q. How can I help a friend or co-worker?**
 - A. Listen, reassure the person that the abuse is not their fault. Remind the victim that help is available. Encourage the victim to get help from advocacy agencies such as the Jamaica Canadian Association.

Know The Signs, Don't Be Abused

Women's & Community Services in the GTA

JCA Domestic Violence Against Women

Phone: 416-746-5772

Women's Health in Women's Hands

Phone: 416-593-7655

Family Services Association of Toronto

Phone: 416-595-9230

Women's Shelter (24 hours)

Distress Centers of Toronto

Phone: 416-408-4357

Safest ways to leave an abusive situation:

- Have a safety plan
- Tell people you can trust
- Plan ahead - pack clothing, photocopy important documents - keep in a safe place
- Put away some money in a safe place
- Be prepared to call 911
- Get legal advice about the situation

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES CORNER

EVENTS UPDATE

Since our last report the membership committee has been very busy with various tasks such as the Seniors Brunch which was well attended and was very successful. The membership planning committee worked tirelessly, Thanks to you Chef Theo, Esmay Murray, Janet Samms, Glenford Gordon, Dean Parker, Edith Hines, Vina Bennett, and Nadine McLean. We are now planning our annual Children's Christmas Party where we are expecting approximately 150 excited children to attend. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the membership office at 416-746-5772 ext 249

Special thanks go TO OUR SPONSORS: Ms. Beryl Nugent, Florence Brown, Raphaelita Walker and Sheila Bullock

Our 2015 Toy Drive has began November - December. In this drive, we are seeking cash/cheques, unwrapped new toys, and personal items from companies and individuals across the GTA and our members, board members and staff. We are asking for donations suitable for children 0-12 years. Our goal is to promote community empowerment through awareness. A drop off box will be placed in the JCA lobby and the membership office.

Membership Recruitment & Outreach

The attendance at the August 2015 quarterly meeting was up significantly from our usual numbers. Thanks to the many phone calls made by the committee outreach communication sub-committee. We are hoping to see more members attend these meetings and use them as forums to share ideas, thoughts and opinions that could enhance the growth of the organization. On a closing note, we understand the needs of our members.

The membership committee continues to show dedication and continues to excel in membership services for the organization. Although we have seen growth in the organization, we are still aiming for more growth. Many of our visible members need to renew and keep their membership up-to-date. Here is an example if membership dues not up to date, they are not qualify to be considered as a member today. This means that if you are not currently paid up you are not able to take advantage of the many benefits of being a member. Keeping your membership current is very important to us and to the organization. I would encourage you to check your membership information and let us bring your membership current. So please PAY UP. As Membership Chair I am more than happy to assist you.

Our sincere sympathies to bereaved families of our members and our heartfelt good wishes for a speedy recovery to those members who are ill or on the road to recovery. We continue to provide support to members and their families throughout their difficult periods and ask you all to keep them in your prayers.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALANDER FOR: Sunday December 6, from 2:00pm to 5:00pm for your children and grand children to participate in this special event.

Membership cont'd

Christmas Shopping - Grand Market at JCA. This year the JCA will be hosting the JCA Christmas Grand Market on December 23 and 24, 2015. This special 2 day event will bring together business in the community, vendors selling clothes, books, toys, baked goods, jewellery and many other goods – Take home or while you shop.

It will be a Blow-Out sale of Christmas gifts items. Please come out and support your JCA. There will be plenty of food for sale, baked goods, take home or while you shop....join us on December 23 & 24 for your Christmas Shopping to support your JCA.

We encourage members and their friends and families to show their support. Admission is FREE. The membership committee needs volunteers who are committed and dedicated individuals to execute membership services for JCA. We must continue our goal to attract new members and retain existing members. Please do your part by signing up at least five to ten members from your circle of friends and family and enter a draw to win a prize at the next AGM.

We encourage you to keep your membership current as members. If you are unsure of your current status, please do not hesitate to contact the membership office to check for an update.

Our challenge to the membership at this time is: "EVERY MEMBER SHOULD SIGN UP AT LEAST FIVE TO TEN NEW MEMBERS PER QUARTER".

Congratulations to the all our new members and their families who joined the Association within this period and hope you will take an active roll into the organization.

Jamaican Canadian Association

Presents

Annual Children's Christmas Party



Sunday, December 6, 2015
TIME 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM SHARP

Deadline for registration November 30, 2015

At the Jamaican Canadian Association



JAMAICA CANADIAN ASSOCIATION – ANNUAL WALK-A-THON

Ten Tips to Walking Good

1. Set a target that your organization intends to raise and devise a strategy to reach it!!!

2. Decide on how many walkers will help you reach that goal with each bringing in...x goal to hit the target.

3. Involve your board. Ask for a \$ commitment from **EACH** board member.

For example min could be \$250.00. **10 board members x \$250 = \$2,500**

Remember each member does not necessarily give this money. BUT each member commits to asking enough people to hit the target

4. Involve your memberships/constituency by getting TEAM LEADERS who will agree to raise a minimum of:.....

(set a target for team leaders). Eg \$250 or \$150 or \$500 whatever you feel comfortable in asking them to raise.

5. Ask your suppliers to donate and find a person who will walk on their behalf

6. Send emails letting people know what you are walking for and ask for their support.

Encourage all your participants to contact their individual networks as well as to the organizations networks

They can email you the money or you can direct them to the JCA website to make a donation to YOUR organization...

Select how many emails you will need to send in order to reach YOUR target

7. Put information about YOUR Walk Good campaign on YOUR website directing people to the JCA website to donate to YOUR organization (We at the J.C.A will keep track of all pledges received in this manner)

8. Have a contest in your organization to see who raises the most money

Find small prizes to give-a-way

-Gift cards; tickets to your events

9. Ask people **OUTSIDE** of our community!!! Your doctor; dentist; drycleaner
ASK!!

10. HAVE FUN DOING THIS. **THIS IS STRICTLY A NUMBERS EXERCISE**

a. DECIDE ON YOUR GOAL

b. Decide ON YOUR NUMBERS

c. DO THE ASKS

d. COLLECT THE MONIES...

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The Country Has Changed. We Must Continue to Change It

By Roy G Williams, BA, MA, MComm., PhD (Abt) - Thursday Nov 12th 2015

It is indeed a pleasure to see you here on this auspicious occasion to welcome and applaud two, I emphasize (2) black, equal gender members of parliament from the Greater Toronto Area. A 100% increase from the last time.

I will speak briefly on what Canada is now and what it was and what we, the Jamaican Canadian Association in Collaboration with other groups and individuals did to change it.

Racism: What does this mean? How does it manifest itself? Let's start with

Immigration Law and Policy—White people from England and Europe were admitted to Canada. People from the rest of the world were not. Barriers to entry included direct travel from country of origin to a Canadian port of entry. There were no Canadian embassies or consulates in these (so called 3rd world) countries. One could not gain access to documents much less get them processed. If you just happened to get to the port of entry as a visitor the immigration officer could summarily reject, detain and deport you. The JCA and the collective “we”, referred to above, pushed back vigorously (advocated) and gradually over time and in incremental steps the immigration laws and policies were changed to become the open door, non-racist immigration law and policy we have today.

Service in Commercial Establishments

Can you imagine walking into a restaurant, a hotel, a pub, a grocery store, a dry cleaning store and the proprietors refuse to serve you because your skin colour is not white? That was the case as late as the 1970's. The JCA and the other collective “We's” pushed back, and prohibitive legislation was put in place in Ontario outlawing the discriminatory practice.

Housing Accommodation

Imagine you have arrived and are seeking a place to live. You see a sign “Room for Rent”, “Flat for Rent”. You walk to the door. You ring the bell. The landlady appears looks at you and then slams the door in your face. Or another landlady says we don't rent to “niggers”. Or you see a “For Rent” sign in the window. This landlady tells you it's already rented. A week later the sign is still in the window.

The JCA and the collective “we” pushed back vigorously and a law prohibiting housing discrimination was passed in the Ontario Legislature.

Employment/Unemployment

You have arrived in the country because the new immigration policy selected only the brightest and best from these formerly excluded countries. You cannot get a job. You suspect it's your skin colour. They advertise but they reject you.

Roy Williams Cont'd

Some give no reason but you can tell by the look on their faces. One tells you you are overqualified for the position. Many tell you you have no "Canadian Experience." Only jobs available are for the porters on the trains and janitors; for the women, domestics and in the garment industry. Racism is rampant. The JCA and the collective "we" pushed back vigorously. We obtained legislation prohibiting employment discrimination.

Promotional Opportunities

You worked hard but you don't get promoted. All the non-whites are at the bottom rung of every organizational ladder. Employees less senior and less qualified, who are white get promoted. Some we helped to train. An employment ghetto is emerging. We visualized a rainbow spectrum throughout organizations. We fought for employment equity. We pushed back hard. We got legislation to outlaw ghettoizing within organizations.

Police Relations

To police every black man looked like every other black man. Thus they had the right to stop and question every black man walking or driving under the pretext that this one fits the description of a suspect they were seeking to apprehend. On the radio the race and colour was always mentioned and often they would claim that the suspect has a "Jamaican accent". We pushed back on this as well even though still today there are some remaining issues. You may have heard of "carding".

Education

In schools, children were misplaced, streamed into non-career, non-higher education and non-professional career directions. We had to push back here as well and we did. We now have better schools, better educational prospects and opportunities for our children. And we now have racialized Teachers, Principals and Administrators within the school systems.

Agencies, Boards and Commissions

These were all populated by old white males. We pushed back on this and we are getting some changes. ABC's are beginning to have a rainbow complexion.

Participation in Governance

The JCA has constantly and continuously advocated that every immigrant become a citizen as soon as he or she qualifies. Thus he or she becomes eligible to be active and fully participate in the governance of his or her new country. We are therefore thrilled and ecstatic that you two recently elected Members of Parliament have advanced the desire for the new Canada and can exhibit the reality of the new face of Canada. You will build on the efforts of those who preceded you in gaining or attempting to gain elective office.

The earliest of these was Bill Whyte. He was the first black man to seek election to Parliament in 1949. He lost. In 1959 Stanley Grizzle was the first black man to seek election to the Ontario Legislature. He lost as well. But things began to change and in 1963 Leonard Braithwaite, a Liberal, was the first black person elected to the Ontario Legislature where he served 12 years until 1975. In 1985 Dr., Hon. Alvin Curling was the second black person elected to the Ontario

Legislature and the first black person to serve in the Ontario Cabinet. He became Speaker of the House and he retired in 2005 after serving for 20 years. In 1990 Hon. Zanana Akande became the first black woman elected to the Ontario Legislature and the first black woman to be appointed to Cabinet in Canada. She served until 1994. Hon. Mary Ann Chambers, Ontario Legislature, 2003 to 2007, was a member of Cabinet. Margaret Best, Ontario Legislature, 2007 to 2013. Hon. Michael Coteau, Ontario Legislature, 2011 to present, is a member of Cabinet. Hon. Mitzie Hunter, Ontario Legislature, 2011 to present, is a member of Cabinet. Granville Anderson, MPP, Ontario Legislature, 2014, to present.

These all have served or are serving in provincial politics and in the Ontario Legislature. However, I cannot close this section without bringing to your remembrance the late Rosemary Brown, the indomitable Rosemary Brown. She was the first black woman ever elected anywhere in Canada. She served Vancouver-Burrard from 1972 to 1986 and she had the audacity to challenge Ed Broadbent for the national leadership of the NDP. That one she lost.

At the federal level the color bar was broken in 1968 by the venerable Hon. Lincoln Alexander, from Hamilton. The first black man elected to Parliament, the first appointed to Cabinet as Minister of Labour. He had a long and illustrious career as he served from 1968 to 1984. The dynamic Dr. Howard McCurdy, the second black man to be elected to Parliament represented Windsor constituencies from 1984 through to 1993.

Then in 1993 in from Grenada came the first black woman to be elected to Parliament, the first from the GTA and the first to be named to Cabinet as Minister of Multiculturalism. She served with distinction from 1993 to 2006 and was Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister Jean Chretien. You would know her as Dr. the Hon. Jean Augustine. Also serving in Parliament from 1993 to 2004 was Ovid Jackson, from Guyana, representing Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

And so to Celia and Ahmed, whom I respectfully refer to as rookies. You have an illustrious tradition to follow. Others have pioneered and blazed a trail for you. They have broken barriers. The baton has now been passed to you. Run well with it. The work is not yet finished. Continue to move the ball closer and closer to the finish line. We have been doing and have done our part in transforming this country. Canada is now one of the best countries in the world to work, live, raise a family and to do business. Please maintain and make it even better. We are here to support you. You've got our backs. We've got your backs. But you must leave a legacy. Something that says we are all better because you were there.

My last advice to you. You are no longer the only black person in Parliament toiling in isolation. Take advantage of the numbers. A critical mass is developing. Dr Hedy Fry, Celia Caesar Chavannes, Ahmed Hussen, Emmanuel Dubourg, Greg Fergus. Create a Parliamentary Black Caucus to exert greater leverage as a group rather than as a lone voice, individually.

We want to hear from you, and often. As you launch out on this voyage we wish you God Speed, God Bless, Good Luck. ----Roy G Williams

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